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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, DRL, ECA, IIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: ONE MORE MINISTER OF EDUCATION SHUFFLED  
OUT

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: During the July 3 Cabinet of Ministers meeting, President Berdimuhamedov continued criticism of the Ministry of Education, noting the rampant problem of corruption in admissions at institutions of higher education. During the meeting, he promoted the Deputy Minister of Education to the position of Minister. This is already the eleventh Minister and the third female Minister of Education since 1992. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) During the July 3 Cabinet of Ministers meeting, President Berdimuhamedov fired Minister of Education Muhammedgeldy Annaamanov and promoted the Deputy Minister of Education to the position of Minister. This is the eleventh Minister and the third female Minister of Education since 1992. The President reprimanded former Minister Annaamanov in July 2007 for poor work.

¶3. (U) The President then disclosed a bribery scandal at Azadi World Languages Institute involving eight students who made payments to one professor, who then routed payments to the Rector via the Dean. The professor appeared on the news, explaining through tears that she has three children and begging for mercy. She also said that she and the Dean have known the Rector since youth and that they received their positions as a result of this relationship. The Prosecutor General then said that a criminal investigation is underway, and eventual prosecution is likely.

BIO NOTES FOR THE NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION

¶4. (U) Since 2007, Gulshat Mammedova has served as the Deputy Minister of Education, with specific responsibility for secondary school and pre-school education. From 2005- 2007, she was the Head of the Ashgabat City Education Department. She worked as Director of the Hero of Turkmenistan Gurbansoltan Eje Specialized School from 2003-2005. Her earlier positions were in a district school and various Turkmen media outlets. She is a 1988 graduate of Turkmen State University with a degree in Turkmen language and literature. Mammedova was born in 1964.

¶5. (SBU) COMMENT: This is the first time that officials have publicly disclosed the names of corrupt educators and the schemes were discussed. However, it is only one example of many similar cases in Turkmenistan. Promotion of Deputy Minister Gulshat Mamedova is not a good sign for Post, which has had a very difficult relationship with the Ministry of Education. Since 2007, Ms. Mamedova has been Deputy Minister of Education. Post has had little interaction with her, but from all appearances, she seems to be a figurehead without any decision-making power. We judge Ms. Mammedova's appointment as a signal for regress in managing

educational affairs. Ms. Mammedova does not posses adequate educational and professional expertise. END COMMENT.

MILES